

NEWS RELEASE

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Protecting Indiana's Investments: Ensuring Graduates Live to Embrace the Future

INDIANAPOLIS, IN. – With many high school and college graduations underway, the Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving cautions all parents and their teens about the dangers of impaired driving. Last year in Indiana, there were 135 young drivers killed in motor vehicle crashes.

“Graduation is traditionally a celebratory occasion for graduates and their loved ones; a milestone in a student's life that should be a cherished occasion, not a time marked with irreversible damage resulting from reckless behavior,” said Mike Cunegin, executive director of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI).

In 2006, drivers between the ages of 15 and 20 represented only 6 percent of Indiana's licensed drivers, yet they accounted for 14 percent of all fatal vehicle crashes. Of the young drivers involved in fatal crashes, 28.2 percent of those who were tested for alcohol were legally intoxicated (BAC of 0.08 g/dL or above) at the time of the crash.

“Parents also need to remember that there are consequences if they host a party where alcohol is served to individuals under the legal drinking age. Besides the potential emotional trauma involved, parents can be held legally liable if an incident occurs involving underage drinking,” said Ryan Klitzsch, Traffic Safety division director of ICJI.

The Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving, a division of ICJI, advises all parents to take an active role in planning their teenagers' parties to ensure they are safe and alcohol-free:

- Never serve alcohol to minors!
- If your teen is attending a party at someone else's home, call the host parent to verify the details and to ensure that there will be adult supervision and no alcohol served.
- Make regular, unannounced visits throughout the evening during the party.
- Know how your teen is getting to and from the party.
- Leave all phone numbers that should be called in the event of a problem or an emergency.



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“It is truly tragic when poor choices wreak havoc in the lives of others. Equally disturbing, is when poor choices lead to a young person’s pre-mature, yet preventable death,” Cunegin added. “Therefore, I strongly urge all parents to talk to their children about celebrating the safe way so they can live to embrace all that the future holds.”

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